

**Accountancy Education & Career
Guidance Playbook:**

BUILDING A PURPOSEFUL AND REWARDING FUTURE WITH ACCOUNTANCY



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PURPOSE OF THE ECG PLAYBOOK

The Accountancy ECG Playbook serves as a comprehensive guide to empower career counsellors in informing students about careers in accountancy. It provides counsellors with accurate, up-to-date information and showcases the diverse opportunities available within the field. The playbook aims to help teachers and career counsellors to have key information to inspire students to view accountancy as a rewarding and dynamic career path, and the purpose it serves to businesses and the society.

The Playbook serves three purposes:



Inform and Educate

Highlighting various roles and career pathways in accountancy, offering key insights to help students navigate and explore opportunities in the field.



Dispel Myths and Highlight Benefits

Addressing common misconceptions about accountancy, highlighting its competitive salaries, strong growth opportunities, and the growing demand for skilled professionals in the field.



Inspire with Real-Life Examples

Featuring stories from professionals in accountancy, illustrating how these individuals support businesses and protect the public interest. These examples inspire students to explore the diverse and meaningful opportunities the field offers.

USING THE ECG PLAYBOOK

To complement this ECG Playbook, we have developed a comprehensive Resource Tool Kit designed to provide you with quick and easy access to essential information on the accountancy profession. This toolkit includes links to websites, reports, and additional resources that you can refer to and share with your students for further exploration.

This section equips ECG Counsellors with strategies to inspire students to explore accountancy as a subject and career. Each "How-To" is tied to specific sections in the playbook and resource toolkit, ensuring counsellors can quickly reference relevant content.



Discuss Purpose, Progression, and Growth

Refer to the "Why Choose Accountancy?" section to highlight the meaningful purpose, progression, and growth opportunities in the accountancy sector.



Inspire with Real-Life Personas and Success Stories

Refer to the "Discover Your Accountant Archetype" section to showcase diverse roles in accountancy.



Highlight the Desired Attributes of Accountants & Dispel Misconceptions

Use the "Are You Cut Out for Accounting?" section to discuss key skills like analytical thinking, communication, and adaptability.

Address common myths through the "Dispelling Common Myths" section to reshape students' perceptions of the profession.



Explore Educational Pathways to Accountancy

Refer to the "Educational Pathways to Accountancy" section to explain the variety of education routes (ITE, Polytechnic, JC, and University) leading to an accountancy career. Highlight the flexibility of pathways, emphasizing that success in accountancy does not follow a single route.



Guide Students Toward Scholarships, Internships, and Career Fairs

Refer to the "Scholarship and Internship Opportunities" section in the Resource Toolkit to explore financial support and work experience options.

Encourage students to attend career fairs listed in the Resource Toolkit to understand the job market and network with accounting professionals.



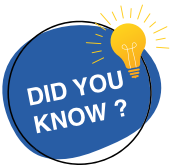
WHY CHOOSE ACCOUNTANCY?

A career in accountancy is not only about numbers—it is a profession that offers meaningful contributions to businesses and society. Accountants play essential roles in ensuring financial integrity, providing strategic guidance, and becoming trusted advisors that businesses rely on.

Purpose

Meaningful Impact Through Accountancy!

Accountants are trusted guardians of a company's finances and strategic advisers for board members and executives. They are pillars of support for financial reporting and compliance and act as a key defense against fraud and financial misconduct. As a financial guardian, accountants play a vital role in maintaining Singapore's reputation as a trusted business and financial hub.



Harry Markopolos and Bernie Madoff's Ponzi Scheme

Did you know that Harry Markopolos, a forensic accountant, uncovered the largest Ponzi scheme in history, where \$65 billion was lost? Bernie Madoff tricked people into believing they were making huge returns on their investments, but it was all a lie.



+ **Key Message**

Accountants don't just crunch numbers—they solve real-world mysteries and bring justice to financial crime.

You can be part of investigations that tackle elusive corporate fraud.

Progression

Levelling up in Accountancy!

A career in accountancy offers endless growth opportunities, as every company needs accountants. High in demand across all industries and providing versatile career options, emerging fields like sustainability reporting, IT audit, business valuation, and financial forensics create fresh job opportunities, enabling you to continuously learn new skills and stay relevant in a changing job market.



Reward

More Than Just Numbers!

An accountancy career offers tangible rewards, including competitive starting salaries and strong long-term earning potential. Beyond financial rewards, the sector provides structured career development and robust learning support. This makes accountancy a fulfilling career as it develops individuals to solve complex financial puzzles, hence empowering businesses to make informed financial decisions.



I have been given ample opportunities to deepen my learning through advanced training programmes. Many of these opportunities also helped to hone my people management skills and gave me the confidence to lead teams and manage various stakeholders. Guidance from my mentors has sped up my learning and fine-tuned my ability to dive deep into the heart of issues.

Ms. Vinodini D/O Ravi,
Audit Manager, KPMG,
Chartered Accountant (CA) Singapore

Key Message for Counsellors

Counsellors should highlight how the profession blends purpose, progression, and fulfilment, making it an attractive and future-ready career choice.

DISCOVER YOUR ACCOUNTANT ARCHETYPE

Help students explore the diverse roles accountants play in today's business world, from managing finances and advising on deals and acquisitions to building sustainable businesses. The examples below highlight just a few exciting pathways.

Business Health Specialist

As Business Health Specialists, accountants ensure financial stability by monitoring cash flow, managing risks, and making strategic decisions that prevent financial breakdowns. They diagnose issues within a company's financials and prescribe corrective actions, such as restructuring or cost management, to ensure long-term success.

Example Pathways: Assurance, Internal Audit, Restructuring and Insolvency & Enterprise Risk Management



Accounting is the nexus of all transactions that are happening in the world. You appreciate why businesses function the way they do when you understand accounting.

Ms Chua Ai Leng,
Partner, EY Singapore
Chartered Valuer & Appraiser (CVA)



Business Advisors and Planners

Accountants do more than manage finances—they act as Business Advisors and Planners, offering insights into a company's financial performance and helping shape long-term strategies. They guide organisations in planning for future growth by forecasting financial needs and tracking cash flow to support sustainable business decisions.

Example Pathways: Financial Accounting, Management Accounting, Merger & Acquisition, Business Valuation, Taxation and Treasury Management

I am a trained accountant, started my career as auditor. Over the years, because of my training from accountancy in analytics, I applied my skills in business management, and learnt the importance of corporate governance and controls. More importantly, I was able to harness the insights from the use of data. And in my business advisor role, I developed the art of stakeholder engagement to get buy-ins and achieve win-win outcomes.



Mr Lim Him Chuan,

Country Head of DBS Singapore

Member, Implementation Committee for Accountancy Workforce Development (ICAWD)

Climate Change Warriors



Accountants play a key role as Climate Change Warriors, helping businesses align financial strategies with sustainability goals. By incorporating sustainable practices into companies' operations, accountants help companies monitor their environmental and societal impact from tracking carbon footprints to ensuring fair labour practices and governance standards.

Example Pathways: Sustainability Reporting and Assurance



Agility and curiosity for learning are key to a successful career in sustainability, as this is a fast-changing and fast-expanding field with new developments, standards and requirements emerging at a rapid pace.



Mr Eric Lim,

Chief Sustainability Officer, UOB

Member, Accountancy Workforce Review Committee

DID YOU KNOW ?



Did you know that modern accounting began to take shape in the 15th century? Italian mathematician Luca Pacioli, often called the "Father of Accounting," published Summa de Arithmetica in 1494, which introduced the double-entry bookkeeping system still used by businesses worldwide.







Cross-disciplinary Opportunities (Data Analytics & AI)



With the integration of data analytics & AI, accountants are evolving into financial detectives who use technology to analyse data, detect fraud and provide strategic insights. These tools enable accountants to offer data-driven recommendations that enhance business performance and ensure compliance.

Example Pathways: IT Audit, Financial Forensics and Corporate Governance



Technology hasn't just enhanced my work as a forensic accountant—it's become an essential requirement in today's landscape of fraud investigation. With fraud increasingly occurring in the digital space, we need to adapt by using tools like data analytics to sift through vast datasets or applying machine learning to review millions of electronic documents. Adopting and integrating these technologies is now central to what we do.

Ms Jeannie Ong,

Associate Director, Grant Thornton,
Chartered Accountant (CA) Singapore, Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE)

Key Message for Counsellors

Emphasise the evolving, cross-disciplinary nature of accountancy, and showcase its importance in emerging fields like sustainability, technology, and risk management. By doing so, you can show students that accountancy offers dynamic career paths with significant impact and long-term growth potential.



ARE YOU CUT OUT FOR ACCOUNTING?

This field offers diverse opportunities that cater to different talents and abilities, allowing individuals to find joy and fulfillment in areas that align with their unique strengths, as outlined in the following areas:

The Data Detective (Analytical Skills)

The Data Detective uncovers insights and trends from data. With sharp analytical skills, they piece together complex information, helping businesses make informed decisions.

The Eagle Eye (Attention to Detail)

With laser focus, The Eagle Eye accountant spots the smallest inconsistencies. Their attention to detail ensures accuracy and precision, keeping financial records in perfect order.

The Guardian of Trust (Integrity and Ethics)

The Guardian of Trust upholds the highest standards of integrity and ethics, ensuring transparency and honesty in all financial dealings. They are the cornerstone of trust in the business world.

The Puzzle Master (Problem-Solving Skills)

The Puzzle Master expertly navigates financial challenges with sharp problem-solving skills. Whether dealing with tax regulations or balancing budgets, they piece together solutions that keep businesses on track.

The Financial Storyteller (Communication Skills)

The Financial Storyteller simplifies complex financial data into clear, understandable terms. With strong communication skills, they empower businesses and individuals to grasp their financial health and make informed decisions.

The Organiser Extraordinaire
(Organisational Skills)

The Organiser Extraordinaire keeps everything on track. With exceptional organisational skills, they handle tasks, deadlines, and reports, ensuring nothing slips through the cracks.

The Adaptable Ace
(Adaptability)

In a fast-paced business environment, The Adaptable Ace excels at mastering new technologies and adjusting to changing regulations. This flexibility keeps them ahead of industry trends and allows for easy strategy pivots.

The Strategy Sage
(Strategic Thinking)

The Strategy Sage goes beyond numbers, guiding businesses in making smart, long-term decisions. Their strategic thinking fosters growth, stability, and enduring success for companies.

AI-driven automation will take care of the repetitive, rule-based tasks, leaving you free to focus on strategic analysis, risk management, and creative problem-solving. To stay ahead, make sure to sharpen the skills that AI cannot replicate: critical thinking, ethical judgment, and emotional intelligence. Remember, technology is an enabler, not a replacement. Accountancy unlocks endless possibilities. Today, it's more than just crunching numbers — it's about driving strategic decisions, advancing sustainability, and making a global impact. Stay adaptable and curious, and your skill set will always be in demand.



Mr Sarjit Singh,

Senior Advisor, Deloitte & Touche LLP
Fellow Chartered Accountant (FCA) Singapore

Key Message for Counsellors

Emphasise that the varied skill sets in accountancy not only enhances the profession's impact but also provides highly transferable skills that are in demand across multiple industries.

DISPELLING COMMON MYTHS



1 More Than Just Number-Crunching

Many believe that accountancy is solely about crunching numbers. However, accountants are specialists in various fields of expertise, including regulatory compliance, improving organizational efficiency, and helping businesses tackle emerging challenges such as climate and sustainability reporting, along with other environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues.

2 Long Hours Are Not the Norm

Another myth is that accountants work long hours year-round. In truth, extended hours are usually seasonal, corresponding to filing deadlines and regulatory obligations. The profession has also made significant strides in improving work life balance with many firms having already introduced flexible working arrangements as a core part of their culture and are investing in employee wellbeing and staff appreciation initiatives. These moves reflect a profession that desires to be progressive and is prepared to embrace change.



3 AI Won't Replace Accountants

A common misconception is that AI will render accountants obsolete. In reality, technology streamlines repetitive tasks, enabling accountants to focus on strategic decision-making and developing key insights. Demand for accountants remains strong, as their roles evolve toward strategic and analytical insights. By leveraging data analytics and digital tools, accountants are able to provide deeper insights and sound advice, making the profession dynamic and future-focused.

4 Accounting is Not Going Out of Style

Accountants remain essential as financial stewards and guardians of the capital market. By upholding rigorous ethical standards and providing financial analysis, accountants help mitigate risks and contribute to the overall stability of the economy. The accountancy profession is also continually evolving, driven by technologies and a growing focus on areas such as ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance). As businesses adapt to emerging developments and challenges, the profession offers opportunities for accountants to refresh their skills, and new areas of work and initiatives.

5 Accounting Is Not Boring

Accounting is an exciting and dynamic field where modern accountants tackle greater responsibilities in analysis, forecasting, and advisory roles. They leverage their skills to solve complex problems and uncover financial insights, facing new challenges and opportunities every day. Accountancy also offers a rewarding and dynamic career, with competitive starting salaries and long-term earning potential.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS TO ACCOUNTANCY

O-Level Completion

Decision Point: Choose an educational pathway.

CHOICES



Junior College

Pathway 1 Junior College (JC):

Pursue GCE A-Levels (2 years)

- A-Level Preparation
- University Admission:
Apply to local universities offering Accountancy degrees

NEXT STEP:

Next Step

*University:
Enter an undergraduate program in Accountancy (3-4 years).*



Polytechnic

Pathway 2: Polytechnic (3 years)

Enrol in a Diploma in Accountancy or related field

Available Polytechnic Diplomas in Accountancy:

- Nanyang Polytechnic: Diploma in Accountancy & Finance (C98)
- Ngee Ann Polytechnic: Diploma in Accountancy (N51)
- Singapore Polytechnic: Diploma in Accountancy (DAC75)
- Temasek Polytechnic: Diploma in Accountancy & Finance (T02)

Next Step:

- Direct Entry to Workforce
- Apply for a degree in Accountancy (subject to GPA).



ITE

Pathway 3: ITE (Higher Nitec in Accounting) (3 years)

ITE Higher Nitec students in Accountancy may progress to Polytechnic to pursue a Diploma in Accountancy (subject to GPA)

Next Step:

- Progression to Polytechnic
- Progression to ITE Work-Study Diploma in Accountancy

University Degree (3-4 years)

Available University Degrees in Accountancy:

- Nanyang Technological University (NTU):
Bachelor of Accountancy
Accountancy Future Leader - Accountancy in
Sustainability Management & Analytic
- National University of Singapore (NUS):
Bachelor of Business Administration
(Major in Accountancy)
- Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT):
Bachelor of Business in Accountancy
- Singapore Management University (SMU):
Bachelor of Accountancy
- Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS):
Bachelor of Accountancy

Apply for a degree in Accountancy (subject to GPA).

*Academic Progression Pathways for Work-Study Diploma (WSDip) Graduates
Upon fulfilling specific admission requirements, WSDip graduates are eligible to
apply for:*

*Full-time or Part-time Degree programmes at Nanyang Technological University
(NTU), National University of Singapore (NUS), Singapore Institute of Technology
(SIT), Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS), Singapore University of
Technology and Design (SUTD), and University of the Arts Singapore (UAS)
Post-Diploma programmes at Nanyang Polytechnic (NP), Ngee Ann Polytechnic
(NP), Republic Polytechnic (R), Singapore Polytechnic (SP), and Temasek
Polytechnic (TP).*

Next Step:
Direct Entry
to Workforce

Explore
pathways to
become a
Chartered
Accountant
(ISCA)
Singapore
through
SCAQ.

Visit ISCA
Website.

THIS IS ACCOUNTANCY: FACTS & FIGURES

The accountancy sector is a cornerstone of Singapore's economy, employing more than 120,000 professionals across a broad range of roles. This sector plays a crucial role in the economy, generating over SGD 3 billion in revenue.



Approximately 20,000 accountants work in accounting firms, providing essential services such as audit, corporate support, tax compliance, and business advisory.



SGD 3 billion
generated in revenue



The remaining 100,000 professionals work across many different fields in businesses, contributing to key functions like internal audit, financial planning and analysis, treasury, and tax.



As emerging areas such as sustainability reporting, business valuation, and financial forensics continue to grow, the demand for specialised talent is increasing, positioning accountancy as a dynamic career choice.



For additional support, ECG counsellors can contact ACRA. We will provide further guidance, answer specific questions, and assist in organising engagement sessions with students.

Email address: acra_accounting_industry_research@acra.gov.sg

For information on the Singapore Chartered Accountant Qualification, ECG counsellors can contact Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants (ISCA).

Email address: marketing@isca.org.sg





The Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA) is the regulator of business registration, financial reporting, public accountants, and corporate service providers. We are responsible for developing the accountancy sector and setting the accounting standards for companies, charities, co-operative societies, and societies in Singapore. ACRA fosters a vibrant and trusted business environment that enables innovation and growth and contributes towards making Singapore the best place for business.

For more information, please visit: www.acra.gov.sg.